

Lt. Governor John Garamendi Says Spike in California's Unemployment Rate Spells More Workforce Retraining for Growing Solar Industry

SACRAMENTO – Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi, the chairman of California's Commission on Economic Development, said California's unemployment rate increase to 7.7 percent in August from 7.4 percent in July, is why he is pushing high growth solar companies in the state to partner with colleges and labor to develop curriculum, provide internships for on the job training and help with job placement for thousands of unemployed Californians.

"There are more than 772 solar companies in California now that need thousands of workers for sales jobs, designing, installation and other technical positions," Lieutenant John Garamendi said. "All projections indicate the state's economy will continue to demand more skilled and highly educated workers in the next two decades. In solar alone, California will need more than 40,000 installers by 2016.

More California companies need to partner with the community and state colleges to help them develop the courses and training so unemployed Californians can fill those jobs. California is going solar. We are going to be the solar capitol of the nation. Clean tech jobs, green collar jobs are instrumental for our future success."

In his role as chairman of California's Commission on Economic Development, Garamendi toured Underwriters Laboratories, a solar testing and certification plant in San Jose on Monday where he unveiled a model to create more partnerships between California's growing solar companies and colleges. Joining him were representatives from community colleges, California solar companies and retrained workers.

Link to Garamendi's job retraining model story = http://www.ltg.ca.gov/images/Garamendi_Solar_industry_KTVU_09-15-2008_17.40.35.wmv